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## ■ CANAL DAYS

### Port museum proud parent of festival

WAYNE CAMPBELL  
 InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE - Like any proud parent, the Port Colborne Historical Museum smiles when it looks at the success of Canal Days.

see MUSEUM | A2

## ■ CANAL DAYS



WAYNE CAMPBELL Staff photo

RedBoss Pyrotechnicians once again put a great fireworks show at the annual Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival. The fireworks are a highlight of the four-day event and always follow the boat parade of lights, led by the Empire Sandy as it returns from a dinner/dance cruise on the Sunday evening. More stories and photos pages 2 and 3.

### A very popular Port of call

WAYNE CAMPBELL  
 InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — A change in promotional strategy has paid off for the Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival.

The city turned its advertising toward Toronto, central Ontario and the Kitchener Waterloo area, Port Colborne special events co-ordinator Allaina Kane said.

Organizers linked into a GO Transit service to St. Catharines with a bus service to Port Colborne.

"It proved popular," Kane said. "We brought visitors down in the morning and took them back at 6:30 p.m."

The star of the weekend was the weather.

see CANAL DAYS | A2

See inside:

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## ■ CANAL DAYS



Staff Photo

Tall ships, such as the Empire Sandy and Lynx, a historic Welland canal with a classic lift bridge and West Street shopping under clear skies, light winds drew thousands to Canal Days.

## Thousands drawn to annual festival

## FROM PAGE A1

"There's not a whole lot you can do if the weather doesn't co-operate during an outdoor event," she said.

The Civic Holiday weekend turned sunny, hot with breeze off Lake Erie making it perfect for visitors, bands, merchants and more than 2,000 volunteers who ran the dozens of event spread over four days.

"The cruises were pretty well sold out, which pleased the ship owners," she said.

"The Empire Sandy comes every year and this will encourage them to continue," she said. "Where else can you get a cruise for \$15?"

The east side and west sides of the Welland Canal were jammed Sunday night with one of the largest crowds ever to watch the parade of lighted ships and the fireworks display, Kane said.

While there were some expected minor problems with rowdiness, Kane said there wasn't anything major

for police or the city's security staff.

Kane praised the volunteers and city staff who carried the load of the festival.

Despite the switch in promotional strategy, Kane said the festival still draws many visitors from the United States, especially those familiar with it who live just over the border and around the lakes.

wucampbell@wellandtribune.ca

## ■ MUSEUM

## Museum's traditions live on

## FROM PAGE A1

It created the festival more than 30 years ago. Since then the museum has watched it blossom to the extent that it has overshadowed its parent.

"We don't get the crowds here we used to. They're now spread around town," said long-time volunteer Bonnie Johnston, who has pretty well worked at every Canal Days for 32 years.

For example, the museum began the Classic Car Show. On Saturday, about a dozen of the original drivers brought their cars to the museum to help celebrate the museum's 35th anniversary.

Meanwhile, down at H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park well over 250 classic cars filled the lakeside park with cars, trucks and hot rods.

Not that the museum was falling behind. The collection of historical buildings were filled with displays.

Some such as a marine model exhibit was a long-time contributor while a growing one is a War of 1812 campaign, which attracted two or three units.

"They're getting ready for the War of 1812 anniversary. We're building toward it," director and curator Stephanie Powell Bastwick said.

The museum was the home of the Canal Days craft sale. That too has outgrown the museum grounds. This year it filled the Westside Arena with crafters and artisan.

The museum is celebrating its 100th anniversary and Port Colborne is celebrating its connections to the navy.



Staff Photo

Empire Sandy sails past the STV Unicorn in Port Colborne harbour. The two ships are popular attractions for visitors. Below, Ron Bodner sells ducks at \$5 each for the annual Showboat Duck Race. Many organizations including Lions clubs, air cadets, church groups, service organizations took advantage of the opportunity sell tickets and other fundraising its the thousands of people visiting Port Colborne.



is celebrating its 100th anniversary and Port Colborne is celebrating its connections to the navy.

But traditions continue to live on with Edwardian Tea at

Arabella's Tea Room.

It was so popular the doors opened early.

wucampbell@wellandtribune.ca

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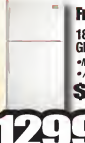
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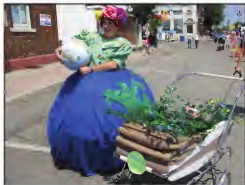
# portraits

■ CANAL DAYS

## Great weather brings big Canal Days crowd



Top left photo: Skye Maitland of Montreal, left, and Sam Elsworth of Medina, Ohio, work as part of the all-female crew on the STV Unicorn from New Jersey. The training ship was making its first visit to Canal Days. Top right photo: Hundreds of classic cars filled H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park for the annual car show. Bottom left photo: David Gibson and his bald eagle don't always see eye to eye at Sky Hunters Birds of Prey conservation display during Canal Days. The birds of prey were a popular stop for photographers. Bottom middle photo: Busker Kristi Heath of Toronto plays Mother Irth with her baby globe during Canal Days festival in Port Colborne. It's a theme children take to, she said, "They like to show me where they live on the baby globe." She was one of a handful of buskers entertaining during the four-day event. Mother Irth is a new character for her. She has been to Canal Days before as a unicyclist. Bottom right photo: Angela Chatterton, visiting from Scotland, shares a lemonade break with Emily and Holden Swartz during a shopping trip along West Street. Local and street merchants were busy throughout the four-day festival that brought thousands of potential customers to the city over the Civic Holiday weekend.



# INPORT NEWS

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## Our view

### Canal Days is over – time to turn thoughts to Marshville

With another Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival in the books, south Niagara residents can get ready for the next big festival – Wainfleet's Marshville Heritage Festival. Like Canal Days, the annual Labour Day weekend festival in Wainfleet started off small and has grown into a huge attraction.

While Canal Days connects Port Colborne to its marine heritage, Marshville makes personal connections. Family descendants of Wainfleet's original settlers are still around the township and their history is shared through the festival.

Buildings on the grounds of the heritage village were brought there from family farms and some buildings even have connections between them.

A trip to Marshville is a like a trip back in time, with volunteers dressed in period costume. Those volunteers can be found running the Dean Saw Mill, cutting wood without the benefit of electricity. They can also be found in a working blacksmith shop and running an old newspaper press.

The event shows what things were like back when the township was founded and starting to grow.

Like Canal Days, Marshville relies heavily on volunteers – some 400 of them – to make the three day event run smoothly.

The volunteers at Marshville deserve a great deal of credit and gratitude for selflessly working hard to ensure the event goes off without a hitch each year.

It is a festival not to be missed and we encourage everyone to get out to Wainfleet on the Labour Day weekend and take a step back in time.

While we're talking about festival, all of the volunteers and organizers of Port Colborne's Canal Days deserve a big thanks, and probably a few days off to recuperate, after another successful event.

The city was busy with visitors from all over Ontario and beyond as they took in events, demonstrations and attractions at Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum, West St., Seaway Park, H.E. Knoll Lakeview Park, Roselawn Centre and Lock 8 Park, to name a few.

Thail ships, including the ever popular Empire Sandy, lined the banks of the Welland Canal. The ships always seem to draw large crowds of people and are a popular attraction. Though it's hard to do for many reasons, we'd like to see a working laker set up for Canal Days. Most residents and visitors watch the ships as they pass by during Canal Days, and the rest of the shipping season, but very few have ever been on board a laker.

But we know people would jump at the opportunity to even take a short tour on board one of the vessels. Maybe the city could see if the Canadian Armed Forces could spare a ship for a visit during Canal Days. That would certainly be an attraction that fits in well with marine heritage.

## I've been thinking

# The dog days of summer

REV. STEVEN DAVIS  
Central United Church

In baseball, they call this time of year "the dog days." The phrase goes back a long way before baseball was even invented, though.

Apparently it started with the ancient Greeks and Romans, who associated the hot days of the summer with the star Sirius – also known as the Dog Star – which, in ancient times, appeared in the skies just as the summer weather was beating up.

Wikipedia shares the following information: "The Dog Days originally were the days when Sirius rose just before or at the same time as sunrise. The Romans sacrificed a brown dog at the beginning of the Dog Days to appease the rage of Sirius, believing that the star was the cause of the hot, sultry weather. Dog days were popularly believed to be an evil time when the seas boiled, wine turned sour, dogs grew mad, and all creatures became languid, causing them to burn with violent hysteresis, and phreniasis," according to Brady's Clavis Calendarium of 1813.

The meaning of the term is somewhat less dramatic in baseball. July and August are a time when

**Over almost 17 years of ministry ... I've discovered that doing anything too in depth between Victoria Day and Thanksgiving likely won't be very successful."**

Rev. Steven Davis

the excitement of Opening Day has faded away, but the excitement of the pennant races hasn't yet arrived.

The middle of the baseball season moves slowly forward, day after day, with games 75-125 being a bit of a drag (ranked – perhaps even by the players themselves).

Dogs aren't sacrificed on the diamond (or in the outfield) but some teams have likely sacrificed themselves already as they come face-to-face with the reality that the pennant races are out of their reach already.

There is a similar phenomenon in the church.

I've never heard us use the term dog days to refer to the church's summer, but there are similarities. Over almost 17 years of ministry, for example, I've discovered that doing anything too in depth in the period from Victoria Day to Thanksgiving likely won't be very successful.

Church activities during that period tend to be social, with – or without – worship continuing, for we are always called to worship God – perhaps especially in the summer,

when we can be thankful for more restful and relaxing times.

One thing that does work well in the summer, though, is children's programming.

Vacation Bible Schools abound, as parents seek out activities for their children to participate in.

This reminds me that Jesus told His disciples to become like little children. If our children continue to learn about God and about faith through the summer months, then so would we.

There may not be as much formal "programming" to take advantage of, but God doesn't need programming to be better understood. The next time you're out on a warm summer day – look around.

You can see Jesus in the faces of those you meet; God is revealed in the beauty and majesty of nature around us; the Holy Spirit may whisper to us in the gentle summer breezes that are so comforting on a hot day.

Feel free to come to church, too – any church. We're still around. Dog days or not.

## readers' views

### Take responsibility for your home utility bills

Thousands of Enbridge customers are reeling from a contract they never needed to sign.

A simple solution to equal budget billing is to create your own. Calculate the average of your year's bills, and pay that amount, and a couple dollars more, every month.

If you had done this a year ago, while others are scrambling because of Enbridge's blunders, you'd be laughing because Enbridge would owe you money. And there would be no contract to sign.

Leslie A. Turvey  
Port Colborne

### Put seatbelts on buses

Why are commercial buses, including school buses, generally not required to

have seatbelts?

There is no dispute, by any safety experts, nor any police officers, nor ambulance drivers, nor any emergency room physicians, that seatbelts save lives.

I am not a conspiracy theorist. But I cannot avoid a nagging thought that commercial bus interests and school boards across North America, must be "paying off" someone, somewhere, and somehow, in order to not have to pay out the (admittedly) large expense of installing simple life savers in their buses.

Oh, I expect to have the following arguments:

1. It would be really tough to get school children to "buckle up" and to strap in properly, and safely. How do teachers and drivers enforce it?

2. Tour buses, and cross-country buses, are so darn big and so safe, and the drivers so expert, why bother with this little "annoyance" for passengers?

Well, operators and passengers of every auto and truck in this nation must wear seatbelts. With reason. Passengers and crew of every airplane must wear seat belts. With reason. Being restrained in any moving vehicle will save, and has saved, so many from injury and death. Undisputed.

But our governments, our school boards and our commercial bus companies all continue to pack dozens of seniors and children, and you and me, into big containers of steel and aluminum – sending them out onto expressways at 100 km/h – and – when those wheels crash, and dozens of passengers are ejected into death, or are crushed to death or injured by other passengers and wreckage, what is the response of our governments, school boards, and private bus companies?

Business as usual, I guess.

Mike Tenzers  
Port Colborne

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■ CANAL DAYS: Jazz on the Lawn at Roselawn

# Jazz and Big Band under a shady tree ...

**I**f there is a better single event during Canal Days than Jazz on the Lawn at Roselawn, I haven't found it yet.

It's not that everything about Canal Days isn't fun; it is.

But talk about a recipe for success.

Here you have one of the most gorgeous properties in all of Port Colborne, a beautiful park-like setting with huge, shady trees dotting the landscape. Add a sea of lawn chairs and happy, laid-back people eager for a great show.

Now toss in a wonderful barbecue lunch of sausage on a bun, topped with sautéed peppers and onions, accompanied by baked beans.

Wash it all down with a beverage, either pop or bottled water, an ice-cold beer or some wonderful Niagara red or white wine.

And then, after everybody is well-sated, bring on The Toronto All-Star Big Band (TABB), a group of young musicians aged 16-21, to play all the jazz and big-band hits from the past century and beyond.

It doesn't get any more perfect than that, it really doesn't.

Last Saturday, the scene repeated itself, as it has for years now on every Saturday of Canal Days.

Ten of us converged on the Roselawn grounds to join the other 500 or so who turned out for what is always an outstanding show.

What can be said about Roselawn that hasn't already been said?

It's a little piece of cultural heaven dropped just outside the middle of our little town. I give the City of Port Colborne credit for recognizing its value a few years ago and approving some very necessary upgrades that needed to be done before the statey manor fell into total disrepair.

Money well-spent indeed. But back to last Saturday and the young members of TABB.

To call them impressive is an understatement. These young people sing



**George Duma**  
BY GEORGE

GEORGE DUMA  
InPort News Photo

Toronto All-Star Big Band (TABB) alumni and current guest vocalist Donovan Locke, left, belts out a tune with help from TABB's musicians, in the background, and the TABB 5, from left, Melissa Lee, Dylan Hillyer, Brittany Mitchele, Evan Porter and Nina Har.

and play with the hearts and souls of 60-something and 70-something big-band greats and jazz divas.

TABB's artistic director, Zygmunt Jedrejek, is a Polish expatriate who moved to Canada in the '60s and he runs a tight ship. He has to.

I know from personal experience that trying to focus about 20 or so young people can sometimes resemble something akin to herding cats.

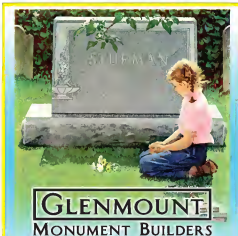
Zygmunt has been successfully running



TABB as a high-end music program since the late '90s.

As the band's website says, "At the heart of the musical matter, the Toronto All-Star Big Band provides one of the most intense and stimulating youth music programs in Canada."

see JAZZ ON THE LAWN | A6



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# No regrets in seeing the Toronto All-Star Big Band again and again



GEORGE DUMA/Import News Photo

Zygmont Jedrzejek, second from the right, the Toronto All-Star Big Band's artistic director, is the picture of calm in the minutes leading up to the band's incredible show at Roselawn last Saturday afternoon during Canal Days.

FROM PAGE A5

Behind the extra-ordinary entertainment, they engage cream-of-the-crop young musicians from across the Greater Toronto Area in a rigorous regime of rehearsals, workshops and a fantastic breadth of rich and skill-building performance experiences with international stars (like Buddy De Franco, Eddie Daniels, Larry Elgart, Clark Terry, Cleo Laine and John Dankworth. We have also worked with wonderfully talented Canadians like Peter Appleby, Tommy Ambrose, Phil Nimmons, Oliver Jones, Rance Lee, and the great Jackie Richardson." A rather impressive list, isn't it?

But of course, talk is cheap if that's all it is. That's certainly not a problem for this group. They can walk the walk.

After kicking off the concert with a Glen Miller version of American Patrol, they segue into Walking My Baby Back Home, with leads vocals by Evan Porter, a

member of the TABB 5. This is the musical ensemble's group of vocalists. Evan is joined by Dylan Hillier and the Andrews Sisters-like trio of Melissa Lee, Brittany Crosby and Nina Hare. Then there is vocalist Donovan Locke, an honorary TABB member who returns sporadically for some shows.

"If he's off for the summer, he guests with us," Zygmont explains.

Donovan joined TABB at 16 and he's now a 29-year-old graduate of Nipissing University's teachers' college with the dream of teaching music to young people.

Show highlights? Pretty much every song TABB plays is a highlight but there are some standouts.

Certainly the old Manhattan Transfer hit Operator/Information is one.

Donovan drops a killer version of the Cab Calloway chestnut, Minnie The Moocher is another.

Anything Melissa,

Brittany and Nina sing, either together or solo, is amazing, but their version of Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy is a joy. And when they team up with Donovan for Accentuate The Positive, there's a collective smile in the audience. This song was a huge hit in 1945 for Bing Crosby and The Andrews Sisters.

The band's finale is always the Louis Prima-written, Benny Goodman-Gene Krupa classic Sing, Sing, Sing. And, if they get a standing ovation like they did last Saturday, they'll come back and leave the audience with In The Groove.

As I said, there is so much that is fun about Canal Days. But there is just this special quality, a magic-in-the-air kind of thing that makes the annual Jazz On The Lawn gig stand out.

Check out TABB's website, [www.torontoallstarbigband.com](http://www.torontoallstarbigband.com). If you've seen this, you will give you some more information about them. If you haven't seen them, do yourself a favour and catch one of their shows in the future.

You'll have no regrets.

George Duma is a resident of Port Colborne and has spent 30 years in the newspaper business. He is currently a member of the Journalism faculty at Niagara College. He welcomes comments and column suggestions and can be reached at: [gduma@cogeco.ca](mailto:gduma@cogeco.ca)

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## ■ NEW PLAYGROUND



KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Allan and Carolyn Buri enjoy the newly-renovated park at the corner of Catharine and Elgin Sts., on Wednesday. The playgrounds near the library and at Lock 8 Park had additions installed recently through a partnership with a local business and the city.

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### NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING FOR NEW OFFICIAL PLAN

The Township of Wainfleet has prepared a new Official Plan which will affect all lands within the Township. Township Council will hold a public meeting at which any interested party may make representation respecting the proposed Official Plan as follows:

**Thursday, August 5, 2010**

**7:00 pm**

**Council Chambers, Township Offices**

**19M43 Highway # 3**

**Wainfleet, Ontario, L0S 1V0**

### ABOUT THE PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN:

The purpose of the Official Plan is to set a long term 20-year vision for the Township, establish goals and objectives to guide future land use changes in the municipality consistent with this vision, and set out specific policies to guide future change while maintaining the desired qualities of the Township. The new Official Plan will replace the current Township Official Plan, as amended, which was originally approved in 1979.

The Official Plan is intended to provide a framework within which Township Council may make decisions regarding land uses, built form, municipal service investments and the protection of key environmental features and functions. It also provides Council with a framework to consider private and public proposals for Zoning Bylaw amendments, site plan approval, building permits, plans of subdivision and land severances.

The new Official Plan was prepared with the assistance of the Township Consultant Sorenson Graves Lowy Planning Associates and is the product of a multi-step process. Specifically:

-In 2009 "Visioning" Workshops were conducted and background information about the Township collected and compiled into an "Issues and Opportunities Report", which is available on the Township website or at the Township Offices (as below).

-In 2010 the Consultant prepared a "Policy Directions Report" which recommends policy directions for a new Township Official Plan, which policies are intended to address the identified issues, opportunities and options. The "Policy Directions Report" was the subject of public and agency review earlier this year and is available on the Township website or at the Township Offices (as below).

-The Consultant has now prepared a "draft" new Official Plan for the Township which is currently the subject of public and agency review. The "draft" Official Plan is available on the Township website or at the Township Offices (as below).

### HOW TO PROVIDE COMMENT/INPUT TO THE PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN:

The public meeting will allow anyone an opportunity to make representation in respect to the proposed Official Plan directly to Township Council. Representation can be made orally at the meeting or in writing any time prior to the meeting (as below).

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT MAKING COMMENT/INPUT RESPECTING THE PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN:

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Township of Wainfleet before the proposed official plan is adopted, the person or public body is not entitled to appeal the decision of the "Approving Authority", in this case the Regional Municipality of Niagara, to the Ontario Municipal Board.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Township of Wainfleet before the proposed official plan is adopted, the person or public body may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Municipal Board unless, in the opinion of the Board, there are reasonable grounds to add the person or public body as a party. If you wish to be notified of the adoption of the proposed Official Plan, you must make a written request to Township Clerk at the address below.

### HOW TO REVIEW THE PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN AND RELATED INFORMATION:

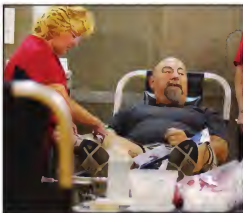
The proposed Official Plan, and related background documentation, is available for review on the Township website ([www.township.wainfleet.on.ca](http://www.township.wainfleet.on.ca)) or at the Township Offices (Planning Department) during regular office hours (address below). Questions, information requests or written submissions respecting the proposed Official Plan should be directed to the Manager of Planning by e-mail ([planning@township.wainfleet.on.ca](mailto:planning@township.wainfleet.on.ca)) or through the Township offices:

Charles V. Miller  
Manager of Planning  
Township of Wainfleet  
19M43 Highway # 3, P.O. Box 40  
Wainfleet, Ontario L0S 1V0  
(905) 899-3463

Dated at the Township of Wainfleet, Tuesday, July 13, 2010

## ■ NEVER HESITATES: It feels good to give blood

JOHN VESSOVAN Staff Photo  
Cori Thompson, left, tends to Marty Smits who was donating blood during a Canadian Blood Services donor clinic last Wednesday at Port Colborne High School.



# Understanding the need to give blood

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — There he was, sitting in the gymnasium at Port Colborne High School, lying on his back with a needle in his arm.

Marty Smits was giving blood for about the 12th time in his life because he understands the importance of this gesture.

In 2005, his father, Rene Smits, died of cancer. During cancer treatment, Rene required numerous blood transfusions and without blood donor clinics,

those would not have been possible.

Smits, a 53-year-old Port Colborne resident, doesn't hesitate to give blood whenever the opportunity arises. And every time he donates, he thinks of one person.

"I do it in his honour," Smits said.

"My heart feels good. It feels good to give blood."

Before his father got sick, Smits never considered donating, but that changed soon after.

"Unfortunately, I waited until it affected me person-

ally. You must look ahead to what could happen," he said following the procedure.

Nurse Dianna Reid said the clinic last Wednesday was 89% pre-booked. The goal was to have 150 people donate blood, but as of press time it was unclear how many people walked through the doors.

"So, far it's been busy," Reid said.

She said every season has its demands and the summertime is no different.

"We need more blood because of long weekends coming up," she said, adding that people tend to be more prone to accidents this time of the year.

Only about 3% of Canadians donate blood, which is not enough, she said.

"We try to educate people through campaigns," she added.

Canadian Blood Services states it collects about 850,000 units of blood each year and processes it into components and products that are administered to many thousands of patients who require blood.

The next blood donor clinic at Port High is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 22, from 1 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. To book an appointment, call 1-888-236-6263.

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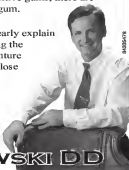
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## ■ MUNICIPAL ELECTION

# 22-year-old makes second political run

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Peter Opdam hopes he can bring some new perspectives to Port Colborne council.

The 22-year-old filed his papers for the position of Ward 1 councillor last Wednesday. He said his political science degree from Brock University, involvement in the community and fresh outlook could benefit council.

At age 18, he unsuccessfully ran for a Niagara Catholic School Board trustee position, but believes the past four years have given him the opportunity to mature and learn.

At the time, he was interested in the school board, but now that he plans on settling down in his hometown of Port Colborne, he would like to be more involved in municipal politics.

"I got an education and more awareness to what goes on around you," he said. "There are certain great things with the city

and certain great potentials. Council has done a great job and there's always room for improvement."

Opdam is a recent graduate of Brock's political science program and currently



Peter Opdam

works in the hospitality industry.

While at Brock, he was the director on the school's student union, representing more than 17,000 students, and as chair of its ethics committee he ensured all members were held to high ethical standards.

He has served on the Port Colborne-Wainfleet community policing committee and was involved with Port Colborne Minor Hockey.

"The citizens of Ward 1 are looking for new ideas and I can bring something to the table."

If elected, he would try to bring residents together through open discussions to see how he could bring residents' concerns to

council.

The biggest issue facing the city is the construction of its health and wellness centre.

He believes that the project be properly completed quickly, but responsible decisions must be made without burdening

taxpayers.

"We should tailor the project to what fits the city and we should stick to the basics with arenas and a pool."

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EYE EXAMS ARRANGED

■ **COUNCIL:** Consultant presents report

# Port should pursue 'lone eagle' sector

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — With the right strategies in place, the lake-side city has potential to grow and prosper.

Port Colborne's economic development strategy and action plan, created over the past year, was presented to council recently by Paul Blais of consulting firm Miller

Dickinson Blais Inc.

The 65-page document contains information collected through public focus groups, business stakeholders and marketing experts to determine how Port Colborne can best move forward.

The objective of the project was to identify target sectors where investment into attraction and retention for the city

needs to be increased, Blais said. For instance, the manufacturing sector is a critical part of Port Colborne's economy.

Though it is struggling, it still provides the highest number of jobs than any other industry in the city, he said.

While Port Colborne has a number of advantages to attracting new manufacturers, such as the Welland Canal and

a high number of residents in the apprenticeship/trade sector, the city should be working on retaining the manufacturers it already has.

Attracting new manufacturers can be particularly difficult, he said, which is why the city should make sure the existing businesses are "so happy in Port Colborne that they go nowhere else."

Where the city should look at attraction is in the "lone eagle" sector, with small independent businesses that have the ability to move anywhere, Blais said.

Port Colborne's most important investment tool is its website, he said, which the city should be investing in and improving every year. Staff should look at including testimonials from local business

owners, describing what they love about the city, in hopes of attracting potential investors.

Tourism is an important sector because the city has already invested so much into it, he said, but it's also an "extremely competitive marketplace."

He suggested Port Colborne upgrade its accommodations, and put together 10 targeted festivals each year.



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■ **ELECTION:** Candidate running in Ward 1

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### InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — Dan O'Hara has spent the past few years working to make his hometown a better place.

He's volunteered with several city committees — including Heritage Port Colborne, the hydro board, committee of adjustment, the Elm St compost facilities public liaison committee, the advisory committee on council remuneration — with the overall goal of making the city a "place to live and raise a family."

But too often, he said, those efforts are rewarded only with frustration.

"Over the past few years I have become increasingly frustrated with the way city bylaws and agreements are enforced. I have tried the front door, the side door

and even the back door," he said in a prepared statement.

He was at city hall last Thursday, registering as a Ward 1 candidate in the Oct. 25 municipal election, in the hope that if he's elected



Dan O'Hara

he will be able to better work towards positive changes in the city.

"Being involved in all those committees you see various things that happen at city hall. You try going through the proper channels ... Sometimes you can affect change from the outside, but you can affect change a lot easier on the inside."

There are a few specific issues

he's like to see addressed, such as bringing better accountability to the city regarding bylaw enforcement, subdivision agreements and subcontracting services. He'd also like to ensure that the new health and wellness centre is developed on time and on budget, at an affordable cost to taxpayers.

O'Hara first ran unsuccessfully for city council in the 2003 election. He sat out of the last election, instead throwing his support behind the current Ward 1 councillors.

But this year, a vacancy has opened in Ward 1 — Dave Barrick has set his sights on becoming the city's regional councillor.

O'Hara has worked as a quality manager for a local steel plant for 12 years. He and his wife Debbie have three sons, Tom, 21, Keegan, 17, and Riley, 15.

### ■ SCHOLARSHIP



Supplied photo

Briggita Hedvig, left, a recent graduate from Port Colborne High School is presented with a cheque for \$500 from Nancy Horpenuk, a director of Port Colborne Hospital Foundation. Hedvig will be attending Concordia University in the fall with studies in a health related field. Each year the foundation provides two scholarships to Port High graduates to assist with their post-secondary education.

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## ■ POLITICS

# Grilling the politicians

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — People enjoyed hotdogs and hamburgers with a side of Q and A at the annual Meet the Reps barbecue.

The event hosted by Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce gives local business owners and the general public a chance to mix and mingle with local government officials.

Despite the dreary weather July 28, the sixth annual barbecue drew about 75 guests — more people than ever before, said chamber president Mike Sloat.

More than a dozen elected officials, including mayors, regional and municipal councillors, MPs and MPPs

visited Lock 8 Gateway Park to answer questions and ask a few of their own.

Sloat said the barbecue was a chance for both elected officials and election candidates to share their platforms with residents.

People tend to “let their guards down” a bit more in a casual setting giving the event a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, he said.

Port Colborne Mayor Vance Badawey said the barbecue is a great opportunity for political representatives to have discussions with local business owners, hearing their side of issues affecting Port Colborne and Wainfleet.

Port Colborne’s business community is active, he said, and often assists

in providing the city with the much-needed input it desires.

It’s partnerships such as those with local business owners that has allowed the city to “really turn a corner” over the past year, Badawey said.

[mfirth@wellandtribune.ca](mailto:mfirth@wellandtribune.ca)

MARYANNE FIRTH Staff photo  
Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce president Mike Sloat grabs some grilled goodies from Port Colborne Mayor Vance Badawey and Wainfleet Mayor Barb Henderson at the chamber’s annual Meet the Reps barbecue July 28.



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## ■ SHOWBOAT THEATRE: Sitting Pretty

# Rollicking, high-energy musical is Showboat's finest

GEORGE DUMA  
In Port News

PORT COLBORNE — Sitting Pretty is one of the finest productions Showboat Festival Theatre has ever staged.

Seriously. It's a rollicking, high-energy musical that's as touching as it is laugh-out-loud funny.

It takes lead character Sam Thorn, played by Geoffrey Tyler, on a journey of self-discovery that eventually leads to self-awareness, a journey where the past finally meets the present.

But not before a series of adventures and mishaps greet him along the way.

We meet Sam at the outset,

the popular star of a children's television show "syndicated to 48 stations across the country." He is Sailor Sam, "the biggest thing in kids TV since Captain Kangaroo."

And as far as life is treating him, he's "sitting pretty," though he never did become the big-league pitcher he'd hoped to be.

However, within a short span, that "pretty" life of his unravels. His show gets cancelled and his fiancée calls off their wedding, a mere two weeks before the ceremony. Suddenly, Sam's world is turned upside down.

That's when the fun begins.

Outside of Sam's character,

actors Greg Campbell and Amy Sellers play all the male and female roles in the productions, and there are many. These two incredibly talented individuals are like theatrical chameleons, slipping in and out of a variety of characters throughout the two-hour show. It's fascinating to watch.

We feel for Sam and what he's going through. He's just so extremely likeable.

Sitting Pretty is a series of vignettes that combine to fill the big picture, tell the whole story, through dialogue and song.

The characters are varied and vivid. We meet Julie-Ann, an old college friend of Sam's

who carries a torch for him and has far years.

We meet Jonah Cobb, an old sea captain Sam turns to for sailing lessons. We meet Jonah's girlfriend, Sheila, every bit as salty as Jonah. Their tango is memorable.

We meet over-the-top actress Dolores Deforest.

We meet Dr. Proctor, who is more lounge lizard than MD, complete with a disco ball. But hey, the Mother of Grace Hospital he works in is next door to the casino at a resort in the Azores.

And there are more, all playing vital parts in this journey of life Sam finds himself on, the one that may ultimately find him he had to go a long way to find what was in his hip pocket.

The stage is a technical marvel. I won't spoil the fun with details, but theatre-goers

will be impressed with the complex simplicity of the stage design and how it functions through various portions of the show. It's magical.

Tyler, Campbell and Sellers never once let up on the energy level that's needed to pull off this spectacle. They're superb.

The writing in this Norm Foster-Steve Thomas co-production is everything we've come to expect from a Foster play — witty, clever, moving and just plain funny.

The music direction and choreography, by Steve Thomas and Bob Riddell, respectively, are spot-on, both wildly entertaining and technically perfect.

And, of course, the ring-leader who holds it all together is ultimately the director, Showboat's artistic director Thom Currie. He has done a masterful job putting this show

together.

Earlier this week, in the lead-up to opening night, Currie had this to say: "I know I keep saying this but I am in awe of the talent that has come to be a part of The Showboat Festival Theatre in 2010. If you've enjoyed the season so far, Sitting Pretty is going to knock your socks off."

He wasn't kidding. It really is that good.

Sitting Pretty continues its run until Aug. 14. For ticket information, call The Showboat Festival Theatre Box Office, 905-834-0633 (toll free: 1-888-870-8181), [www.showboattheatre.ca](http://www.showboattheatre.ca). All performances are at The Roselawn Centre Theatre In The Round, 296 Fielden Ave., Port Colborne.

[gduma@cokeco.ca](mailto:gduma@cokeco.ca)

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Sprinkle remaining coconut on top.

Press firmly.

Place in fridge for 24 hours.

Cut into Squares.

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■ **GOVERNMENT:** Accessibility grants available to organizations

# Humberstone Hall backdrop to federal announcement

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

PORTR COLBORNE — The national spotlight shone brightly Wednesday on the newly renovated Humberstone Hall.

In 2009, Port Colborne received \$50,000 through the Enabling Accessibility Fund to update the hall's entrance and washrooms, making them fully accessible to all residents.

With renovations now complete, the hall was chosen by the federal government to act as a backdrop for a national funding announcement made by Minister of State for Democratic Reform Steven Fletcher.

Fletcher announced organizations may now apply for grants up to \$75,000 through



Mayor Steven Badawey and Minister of State for Democratic Reform Steven Fletcher announce a national accessibility funding program at Humberstone Hall.

the Enabling Accessibility Fund, as part of Canada's Economic Action Plan. Eligible projects will help to improve accessibility for

people with disabilities, improving "access to facilities, activities and services," he said in a release.

"Year 2 of Canada's

Economic Action Plan builds on the success of (the EAF) program by increasing investments that remove barriers for Canadians with disabilities."

The fund was originally announced in 2007 as a three-year, \$45-million program. It has since provided funding for more than 300 organizations to improve accessibility in their communities.

Port Colborne Mayor Steven Badawey said there's "a great deal of pride and appreciation" in having the city's historic hall chosen to host such an important announcement. The hall, and its recent renovations, is a symbol of the

new and improved gateway to the city, he said.

It represents what is happening in the municipality, with reconstruction occurring in the Humberstone Main St. community and throughout the rest of the city, he added.

Accessibility is one of council's main priorities to ensure all destinations within the city are fully accessible so "anyone and everyone" has access, Badawey said.

He stressed the importance of the work the government is doing to make facilities accessible for everyone — including those with physical disabilities, the seeing and hearing-

impaired, seniors and those with mobility issues.

Grant proposals can be submitted until Sept. 10 under the fund's small projects component, which include projects such as renovations, construction and retrofitting of buildings, modification of vehicles for communities use, or enhancements to make information and communication technologies more accessible.

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■ **TOO MUCH:** Customers get big bills

# Residents get shock when they open gas bills

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

WELLAND — There's no way," says Wellander Louise Pusiak, holding a \$1,400 bill from Enbridge Gas Distribution.

Her bimonthly natural gas bills are usually between \$63 and \$100.

She said there's no way she

could have used as much gas as she's being billed for now.

She's one of several area residents shocked to find huge gas bills waiting for them in their mail over the past few weeks — enough to inspire Mike Haines, constituency assistant for Welland MPP Peter Kornas, to write a letter to Enbridge Gas Distribution president Janet Holder, last

Tuesday, asking her to review the utility's policies regarding its budget billing plan.

Pusiak doesn't use a lot of natural gas.

"I have brand new windows, a new (programmable) thermostat and I live alone," she said.

She hasn't even been using her gas stove, offering instead for the microwave or barbe-

cue since her son enrolled in college.

"I'm careful about what I do." Her current gas bill includes a \$1,060 budget-billing plan adjustment charge — a charge added to the bills of some Enbridge customers every July when estimated natural gas use is compared to actual gas use.

With current charges, a late

payment fee, a balance forward of about \$100 and taxes, Pusiak's total bill came to \$1,435.07. She also received a letter from Enbridge explaining the budget billing plan adjustment charge and apologizing for any inconvenience the huge bill might have caused her. The letter also offers to allow customers to pay their hefty bills in

installments.

The single mother is wondering how she can possibly afford to pay it.

"My parents are on a pension. They can't help me. They feel bad but I'm not going to ask them. My sister is a single mom too, so where do you want me to go?"

**GAS BILLS** | A19



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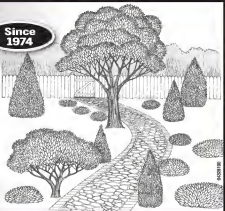
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■ **HEALTH:** Reply long time coming

## Saracino still waiting for answers

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — It's been six months since Bob Saracino wrote a letter to Premier Dalton McGuinty, urging him to preserve services at the city's hospital.

After "numerous" follow-up phone calls to the minister's office since he mailed that letter in late February, the Port Colborne regional councillor finally received a reply.

And the eight sentences written by one of McGuinty's assistants gave Saracino little comfort.

"It's just been an ongoing saga to get any answers out of these people at all," he told The Tribune recently.

The letter he received July 20 said McGuinty will be unable to tour the hospital at this time because of scheduling demands.

The letter goes on to say that the premier has noted the comments Saracino had expressed in his original letter, and the premier asked Health Minister Deb Matthews to respond to those concerns.

In his original letter, Saracino reminded McGuinty about paediatric emergencies he made to the preservation of emergency services at the hospital. But in the eight years since McGuinty made

that promise, Saracino wrote, the hospital has become "a shell of its former self" as a result of service cutbacks.

He also wrote about the "long awaited" renovations planned for the former emer-

g e n e r a l d e p a r t m e n t which has since been d o w n g r a d e d to an urgent care centre.

"Where does that stand?" he asked in his letter.

"It's nonsense," he said. "It's just getting worse and worse. We have to know what they're planning to do. It's just been like a nightmare here."

Now, he's hoping for answers from Matthews.

"At least now it's in their hands, again. Now the response has come through from the premier's office and he's turned it over to the minister of health," he said, adding he hopes he won't have to wait another six months for a response from Matthews.

"I will be pursuing this. I will be keeping on top of this. These questions are in need of a response," he said.



Bob Saracino

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